

Military History At The Request Of The Orem City Heritage Commission On Which I Served From 2002-2006 As Commission Chairman And Public Relations Representative. This history is now a part of the Orem City Veterans Project files in Orem City's website

Note: I was interviewed for this history by Les Campbell, Orem City Council Member, Orem, Utah during 2003 (Updated 1/6/2006)

I was born to the name of John Patrick Stone on December 31, 1940, in South Gate, Los Angeles County, California. I lived with my parents James Wright Stone and Mae Imogene Davis Stone, as well as my siblings Marilyn, James Davis, and Norma Jean in South Gate for four years, moving during 1944 one mile South of Spanish Fork, Utah, with the family, due to health concerns for my Mother. My parents bought my maternal great-grandfather Joseph Ellison Beck's home. He had built in 1862, after he and his family came across the plains with the Mormon Wagon Train.

I was raised there on a portion of what my great-grandfather's farm had been. My Dad bought a half acre, which he owned from 1944-1959. I was also raised part of the time on my maternal grandfather John Stoker Davis' farm about a half mile away to the Southwest near where the old Del Monte food processing plant building is still located. I went to grade school at Thurber Elementary, then onto Spanish Fork Junior and High Schools in Spanish Fork, a farming and ranching community at the time. I had wonderful experiences in my youth, especially with numerous cousins my age, as well as friends. Some of my friends in my pre-teen years weren't the best, leading to my teens being a little on the wild side. Enough so, that it became a concern to my parents and extended family.

I am the youngest of the four children, being junior to my Sister Norma Jean (now deceased) by 9 years. My other siblings were born about 2 years apart. I barely graduated from high school because I just didn't care about school, and didn't have much support from my family and extended family with homework and extra-curricula activities. That I don't care attitude almost cost my admission to Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, when I decided to get my degree in Social Work following retirement from the Air Force. Fortunately things worked out a little bit better because of college courses I took while in the military, as well as 23 years of military experiences and training.

Relating back to my years in California (1940-44), I can just barely remember the air raid sirens in the Los Angeles County basin, when the cities were blacked out for fear of a Japanese attack from the West during WW II. My parents and siblings remember me screaming and running into the bedroom, and hiding underneath my bed. I was afraid of what might be happening to me.

I'd like to move forward in my life, to share something from about the time I graduated from high school. I was kissing my now deceased (Dec 2003) wife Deanna (maiden name Jex) goodbye at the Salt Lake City International Airport (military side). She was my girlfriend at the time. I had just graduated in May of 1959, and in June I was headed to Fort Ord, California (now closed), near Monterey.

It was here that I got eight weeks of basic training. Following basic training, I was assigned to AIT (Advanced Infantry Training) at Hunter Liggett Military Reservation near King City, California. Prior to this time, I had never been much of a person for military matters, but there wasn't much in the way of work around Spanish Fork for me. I had been recruited into the Utah Army National Guard's 145th Field Artillery at Provo, Utah, by my Brother Jay (James), who would also be my unit Commander as a 1st Lieutenant (I fibbed about my age). He had received a battlefield commission during the Korean War, having previously been an enlisted Master Sergeant, as well as a Chinese/North Korean Army POW between 1951-1952 for a short time. He is now a retired Major. I had been going to Guard drills on weekends once a month before I graduated from high school. Funny thing was that during my three years in the National Guard, I always missed summer camp, but it didn't bother me. During those three years I was associated with several other 145th Field Artillery units in central Utah, as well as one in Salt Lake City, and in Orange County California. It should be noted that it was during this period that I tested for admittance into Officer Candidate School in the Guard, but missed the cutoff by one point. I could have been a 2nd Lieutenant in the Guard...oh well! Jumping ahead a little, my wife and I had moved to California after our marriage for a short time, on a working honeymoon for a few months in 1960, and I transferred to a Guard unit there. While with the Utah Guard unit, I was a communications specialist with the tank-mounted howitzers that had been used by the 145th in Korea. Being tank mounted, they could fire a nuclear tipped shell, and then run for cover if needed to avoid detection by the enemy.

Back to basic training at Fort Ord. My gosh! What a cultural shock for me. I had been experiencing Guard meetings near home, and now it was 24-7 (twenty four hours/seven days a week) military. It was very interesting to be up at 4:30-5:00AM each morning, out doing calisthenics, formations, marching, cleaning weapons, shining boots, firing weapons, and much much more. Man, that was the "buffist" (in shape) I have ever been in my entire life, bar none! I soon hit 230 pounds of wampin', stompin' muscle, and I looked it. Needless to say, I came out of basic in very good shape. I am proud that I fired expert in the top ten of my platoon, with my M-1 rifle after firing hundreds and hundreds of rounds of ammunition on all types of ranges. I really enjoyed working with weapons (my Dad taught me to shoot as a 12 year old, and I started hunting with him when I was 16). On some rifle ranges at Ft. Ord, we had to walk the range with targets popping up. We had to be ready to shoot as we walked, stop, fire, then move on. All of the foregoing was being done in a safe manner. We would be in foxholes such as in actual battle. We had night scopes on our rifles for night range exercises. The night vision scopes were brand new in 1959 when I was training. A very interesting thing was now happening to me ...I began to be hooked on things "military".

I still remember our last night on the infiltration course, when our platoon Sergeant, Staff Sergeant Couter (Cuture sounding in French), sat us all down and told us about a basic trainee (a Guardsman) who had been killed three weeks earlier on the course when he stood up in the direct line of fire of a 50 Cal. Machine Gun (the "Mah Duce", for M-2, as it is called even today in Iraq and Afghanistan).

He made an impression on all of us, because we stayed close to the ground with our M-1's as the "Mah Duce" fired regular and tracer ammo starting at about 18 inches overhead. The guy that died was caught mid-section as he stood up, before the range master called "cease-fire".

Even when the nitro-paks in the sandbagged enclosures next to me went off, lifting all of us off the ground a bit, I "kissed" the ground even closer. Once I, and the others, got down to the end of the course, I slithered up over a railroad tie and dropped down about 6 feet. When I got there, it was almost like blood, sweat, and tears. Strange enough though, watching the tracer ammo rounds hit the end of the range ahead of me was oddly beautiful. I was done! It would be graduation the next day in full dress uniform! I had made it! I was a tough as nails soldier with the Utah National Guard!

I watched during Basic as trainers sometimes took people beyond their endurance level, especially those that were overweight. I would be running with the platoon on the Pacific Ocean beach with a 60 lb. pack on my back, and someone would drop out. It was here that I saw my "helping others personality" begin to develop. When there was a dropout, myself and other compassionate buddies picked them up, and helped them along to make their commitment for the day. That type of service was recognized in my being placed in the top ten of our entire company in awards by the Commander. I was honored for several things, including physical fitness, weapons qualification, and generally going the extra mile in anything I did. I was saddened that none of my family members attended my graduation, but my parents were quite poor, and couldn't afford the trip. My sister Norma Jean almost made it from Orange County, California. I remember how special mail call was at Basic Training, with letters coming from my wife-to-be who I would marry in 1960.

Because I left California when I was age four, I don't remember long walks on the beach like I had at Fort Ord when we were on pass for the evening or weekend. I really got to know my home state of California....and I love her to this day! I got to hear the surf, be with good friends and enjoy the cool evening breezes. A lot of my high school friends, as well as others from Utah, were a part of my basic training unit which was B-1-1 ("B" Co., 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade) in huge new cinder block 3 story buildings on Ft. Ord's South end. And those high school and National Guard friendships have carried over as we have planned and attended high school reunions. I have retained very few Guard acquaintances from outside Utah.

From Fort Ord, some of us were sent to Hunter Liggett Military Reservation (HLMR) which remains open and expanded to this date, and replaced much of Fort Ord's military functions. Fort Ord closed during the early 1980's. HLMR was where I received communications specialist training, which trained us to lay ground wire from the command post to front line field locations.

I have always been afraid of heights, so when we were doing the pole-climbing part of my training, sometimes I would burn out (where the boot clamp-ons didn't stay in the pole and I slipped down the 30 foot pole slivers and all). But I overcame my fears, and it wasn't such a bad experience after all. I passed all the courses appropriately. I went on to become one of the more qualified switchboard operators, along with other guardsman from other states, at HLMR. In 1959, we still had the old "number please" switchboard systems that had been handed down from active duty Army units. One day, I rang the Post Commander back in his ear, and I won't repeat here what he said. I later apologized to him when he and I were off duty at the Post. The first eight weeks were spent at Basic, with the remaining 4 months in Advanced Infantry Training at HLMR ending in November 1959 just before Thanksgiving. I returned to Utah, and began to enjoy what I had been selected by my Commander, my brother, for as I served the guard unit in communications. I married my wife, Deanna, on April 14, 1960, in the Salt Lake Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. We then went on the working honeymoon to Southern California, previously mentioned. I had been promised by Norma Jean's husband Leon, that he had a tile setter's helper position being held for me by his company. When we arrived from Utah the position had been filled. I then went from one odd job to another, including an oil reclaiming facility near what is now called Watts. I am lucky I didn't get cancer from that job. We lived in Manhattan Beach, California for a few months. We then returned to Utah where I worked for Deanna's cousin being a brick layer's helper in Spanish Fork. We then moved to Salt Lake City, living on the East bench on 9th East and 10th South. I worked for American Paper and Supply as a warehouseman for almost a year doing deliveries, wrapping packages for shipment, along with attending National Guard meetings in a supply company at a Salt Lake City unit.

During early 1961, Pres. Lyndon Johnson's experience with a failure in the economy, I found myself unemployed only for a few days. I have always felt positive that from the time I graduated from high school to my retirement at age 62 in 2002, that I have always been employed. My Dad had me working with him as a custodian at an LDS Chapel from the time I was age 13, until just before I graduated in 1959. I picked up an exceptional work ethic from my Dad that lasted from 1953 right up to the volunteer work I am doing in the community as of this writing.

Early in 1961, I returned to our apartment in Salt Lake to tell my wife that I had been the last one hired, and the first one fired from the paper supply company. My boss had shown a lot of emotion when he had to let me go (he didn't call it being "fired"). After Deanna and I shared some tears, she recommended that I go see the area Air Force recruiter because of my prior service with the National Guard. I soon transferred from part-time National Guard into full time active with the Air Force. The Guard had prepared me for three years how to excel as I moved on in active duty.

I was inducted into the Air Force at Fort Douglas, where all branches of the military were processed.

I took my induction oath, and before long I was flying to Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio for 8 more weeks of Basic Training. My wife returned home to live in several basement rooms of her parent' Spanish Fork, Utah home.

I spent only five weeks of the eight weeks of basic training with the Air Force, because I had served three years with the National Guard and had completed Army Basic Training. I was allowed to "test out" by taking several examinations and passing them. I next traveled by train (my first train ride in my life at age 21), to my next assignment at Amarillo Air Force Base, Texas (near Amarillo and now closed) during February 1961. I attended twelve weeks of the Aircraft Refueling and Maintenance Technical School and graduated in the top ten of a class of about 30 enlisted airmen. At this school we were taught how to properly refuel and maintain the aircrafts fuel system. It was during this time period that the "Cold War" with the Soviet Union began to develop with international tension. That is why I am called a Cold War Veteran, as opposed to a Korean or Vietnam Veteran. Because I graduated at the top of the Technical School, I was asked by the school commander if I wanted to be trained as a Missile Refueling and Maintenance Specialist, to work with the Atlas "F" Missiles that would soon be on line in the nation's arsenal and be aimed or targeted for the Soviet Union. I jumped at the chance, and am glad that I did.

I had met an Airman Steve Ruchala at Amarillo Air Force Base, and he was also selected, as I was, to go to our next assignment at Chanute Air Force Base, Illinois (125 miles South of Chicago and now closed) to attend Missile Refueling and Maintenance Technical School. It was here that my wife Deanna joined me with our two pet parakeets. During April 1961, we drove a fully loaded U-Haul trailer with all we owned from Spanish Fork to Rantoul, Illinois, which was located just outside the North gate of the base. On our way to Illinois, our car broke down at 11,000 feet in the Rocky Mountains, on Loveland pass above Denver. We moved into a small 8x40 foot rented mobile home in Rantoul, Illinois near the base. I will never forget one night during the Spring while we were experiencing tornado producing thunderstorms, that a bolt of lighting with extremely loud thunder hit near the mobile home. Deanna and I were trying to sleep, and she was almost asleep close by. When the thunder hit with hail pounding on the metal roof, she wrapped herself around me, and wouldn't let go the rest of the night. We had seen our first tornado touching down about 15 miles West of Rantoul the afternoon before.

We had good socializing times while living in Rantoul, with Deanna and I playing volleyball in the mobile home park's center court numerous times. I invited Steve and other classmates from the school, and we usually creamed the other court co-ed teams. We became involved in the Rantoul LDS Branch, which met in one of the World War II era buildings on base. I never received a calling there, but Deanna played the piano for some meetings. The Branch often went on outings to Lake of the Woods Recreation area, where we met the missionaries serving in the area for the Church.

It was here that Deanna and I would start our missionary work together bringing investigators of the Church to our home, where they were taught the discussions. The first of our investigators to join the Church was named James (last name unknown), who I met on base and was attending another Technical School. Deanna and I played tennis with him on base numerous times.

It was while training at Chanute Air Force Base that I was trained on how to handle and transport RP-1 (Rocket Propellant #1, highly refined kerosene with additives for high combustion) long distances; also how to handle and transport highly explosive Liquid Oxygen (cryogenic liquid at 297 degrees below "O") to be used/mixed at missile launch with the RP-1 to provide the ignited thrust of the Atlas "F" Missile to get it to its intended target. I also was trained on how to handle Liquid Nitrogen (also a cryogenic at 327 degrees below "O"), which was used when converted to a gas at the missile site to pressurize missile components, as well as the outer thin skin of the missile in the silo and at launch. This was so that the missile didn't fall in on itself with nuclear hydrogen bomb included, into a big heap. We also studied extremely dangerous exotic fuels such as anhydrous ammonia, hygroscopic fuels and other missile fuels/oxidizers, which I worked with at an Air Force Base in California later in my career. One drop of these products on the skin would kill quickly. We were trained in using self contained breathing suits for those products. During training at Chanute we no longer wore the fatigue uniform, but began to dress in white coveralls with SAC (Strategic Air Command) patches on the shoulder sleeve, blue neckerchiefs with white stars around the neck, and steel hard-hat helmets painted blue with a diagonal white band with blue stars painted on. It made me proud to be in a support unit for the 556th SMS (Strategic Missile Squadron) when I arrived at my next duty assignment.

I graduated from the Technical School at Chanute Air Force Base, and received PCS (permanent change of station) orders for Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York (now closed), just across the border about 60 miles South of Montreal, Canada. The base was located along the shores of Lake Champlain, which has a rich history surrounding the War of Independence in the New England states. On our trip to Plattsburgh, our older model Ford car gave out and had to be repaired in route once again. We pulled into Plattsburgh Air Force Base housing after midnight, and slept in our car in front of the base housing unit of a Capt. Jerry Kofford and his family. We stayed with them until we secured an apartment in the city of Plattsburgh near the base. The Koffords were to become very good friends over the next 4 years.

Deanna had never been away from home very much before coming to New York State, so she got very homesick, but she worked through it. We had not had any children, having only been married just over a year. Terina Joy and David James would be born during the next four years while we were in New York. I was assigned on the Air Force Base on the flight line (where aircraft were parked) temporarily refueling and maintaining B-47 and B-52 jet bombers, as well as KC-97 (propeller driven) and KC-135 jet air-refuelers for the bombers, as well as other transient aircraft.

This was necessary because the 12 Atlas “F” missile sites were being constructed around Plattsburgh Air Force Base had not been completed, so I would use my missile skills. The early model B-52 bomber, designed and first flown in the early 1950’s, is still being flown by some of the Plattsburgh pilot’s grandsons in 2006. The same applies to the early model KC-135, designed in the late 1950’s. The B-47’s and KC-97’s have been retired to the desert “bone-yard” at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona. All of the air refueling planes from Plattsburgh Air Force Base and other bases, teamed up to get the bombers refueled over the Atlantic, and on into the European continent so as to fly along the borders of the Soviet Union. One KC-135 could air refuel three B-52’s in route across the Atlantic. I never got a check-ride on any of the aircraft in the Air Force inventory until I became a middle level and senior NCO (Non-Commissioned-Officer) later in my career.

During August 1962, I was finally assigned to the missile support unit of the 820th Supply Squadron (logistics), in direct support of the 556th Missile Squadron at Plattsburgh. We worked out of a cryogenic liquid production facility on the Northwest side of the base near the aircraft runway, as well as Interstate 87. Having been wearing regular Air Force fatigues working on aircraft at the base, I welcomed the chance to again wear the sharp looking blue and white helmet, white coveralls with blue rank chevrons and SAC patch, as well as the blue neckerchief and spit (actually water) shined high top boots. We were soon transporting all the cryogenic liquids in large cryogenic trailers, gaseous helium in tube bank trailers, and RP-1 in large tanker trailers to twelve different missile sites, two of which were in Northern Vermont. Our cryogenic trailers (like huge thermos bottles), were loaded with 5000 gallons of liquid oxygen or nitrogen at the production plant, and then myself, and several airmen drove several of these missile support vehicles (larger than the standard 18 wheel tractor trailer rigs we see today) to the missile sites. Some sites were up to 50 miles or more away from Plattsburgh Air Force Base.

Missile sites were located and numbered starting with the 2 sites in Vermont near St. Albans, the next at Swanton. Then moving into New York state, the other ten sites were located with Site #1 right on the Canadian border North of Plattsburgh near Champlain (could throw rock off of missile complex into Canada), and other sites numbered in order near Ellenburgh Depot, Dannemora, Lyon Mountain, Morrisonville, Redford, Ausable Forks, Keeseville, Clintonville, and Willsboro. We lower rank airmen had a huge responsibility driving these hazardous transporters safely through populated centers, as well as rural settings off base.

Not to long after the missile sites were upgraded and functional, we became very busy keeping the cryogenic tanks (25,000 gal. Cap.) full of liquid oxygen and nitrogen as each site’s tanks would loose liquid through vaporization and venting. Next, to our complete surprise, our nation went into it’s first nuclear alert. I had ended up, along with my family and military peers, right in the middle of the Cuban Crisis in late 1963. President Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Krushchev were in a naval blockade standoff near Cuba, over nuclear missiles based in that country.

During this time I had some very stressful emotional experiences that are hard to dredge up and talk about. Fidel Castro and the Soviets wanted to launch missiles (from 90 miles away) on Florida, as well as the East coast.

Our military to this day uses a system of alerts called defense readiness conditions (or “DEFCONS #1 through #5”) to define the status for war. Before the Cuban Crisis we had been at a steady DEFCON 4 due to the Cold War standoff with the communists.

When the Cuban Crisis escalated through agonizingly long and tense days, Pres. Kennedy ordered the pentagon based military Chief of Staff to raise the alert status to DEFCON 3. This level of alert put all the bombers and tankers at Plattsburgh AFB, at full alert. Planes were taking off day and night, with sometimes only 2-3 minutes between takeoffs. With our production plant near the North end of the 15,000 ft. runway, I and the other airmen, when we had time, had a birds eye view of hundreds of all types of aircraft from our base, as well as from all over the country (including U-2 and other service spy planes), landing and taking off as they headed across the Atlantic. My wife in the apartment in Plattsburgh would tell me about the aircraft coming right over the city, waking our daughter Terina (Born June 1962) up from a nap during the day. Our son David wouldn’t be born until July 1964, and our youngest son Gary wouldn’t be born until two years (December 1982), after I retired from the Air Force. It was hard for the three of us to sleep at night, even when I worked long, long hours at the base. When Pres. Kennedy had spy plane photographic proof of missiles in Cuba and showed them to the Soviets at the United Nations in New York City, he ordered the military to DEFCON 2, a high state of alert. DEFCON 1 is used only for attack or launch of missiles and aircraft nuclear bombing.

The day that DEFCON 2 was declared I will never forget. I clearly remember I was connecting my assigned truck/tractor to one of the cryogenic missile support trailers, when my supervisor SSgt Quinn ran from the his office in the cryogenic production plant, yelling, “Stone! I need you take your full load of liquid oxygen to Site 2 in Alburg (Vt.) rather than your previous assigned site. Pres. Kennedy just declared a level 2! Site 2 is dangerously low of oxygen, and needs to be brought back up to EWO (Emergency War Operations) site status. Get there as soon as you can.” If I remember correctly, I pushed my “rig” at speeds around 75-85 MPH all the way North on I-87 to the Canadian border, before turning East into Vermont. The speed limit was 65 MPH. Two other airmen with oxygen loads followed behind me. When we arrived at the missile site, the other two loads were emptied first into the underground Atlas “F” silo (near 200 feet deep) liquid oxygen tanks located below the missile with its hydrogen bomb tip.

It was the first time 3 liquid oxygen transporters had been allowed inside the high security fences on any site at the same time, parked surrounding the circular pad where doors opened at launch time, allowing the missile to be brought up to launch position when the DEFCON 1 order was made by the President. The other two crew members with me rapidly emptied their transporters and one had departed the site.

As I was finishing my transfer of product, the site commander, a Lt. Col., advised over the site sound system that all 12 sites were now in EWO DEFCON 2 status, and were now secured and locked down. I rushed to the emergency phone box and advised the site commander that he still had two transporters on site, with several thousand gallons, out of 10,000, still sitting just a few feet from his missile launch system. I advised him that if he launched the missile, the nearby transporters would explode because of the hot missile thrust/exhaust, and the volatility of the remaining liquid oxygen and would destroy the missile as it launched. I also advised him that if the Soviets got the first strike, and hit his site first with their missile with his missile still in the silo, that the exploding transporters would punch a hole in his silo blast doors and destroy his missile.

He refused to allow myself and the other crew member to leave. He would not let us come down into the silo crew areas for protection if there were a launch, or if we had an incoming missile. If either had happened, myself, as well as my friend Steve Ruchala, and a security policeman, were left unprotected and could have died. It was a very stressful 9 hours for the three of us not knowing if or when the President would go to DEFCON 1 for launch of all the nations dozens of missiles. I found out later that our site (our prison), was targeted by a missile site in Vladivostok, Soviet Union with a flight time of 17 ½ minutes. All the other sites were targeted with enemy missiles, including the base. My wife and family could have been killed. When the President and Soviet Premier finally work things through and DEFCON 3 was restored, we were allowed to return to Plattsburgh AFB, over 50 miles away. My wife, my supervisor, and our commander were extremely worried as to what our status was. The Site Commander could have got us all killed because he did not assure all personnel in his secured area were in a safe location, and vehicles cleared from the launch site. Following my report to my supervisor and commander, the Site Commander was reprimanded. I can tell you that three people sitting in a Quonset hut building on top of Site #2 near Alburgh, Vermont, were fearful and stressed almost to the point of tears. I know I was. I didn't face rifle bullets being fired at me during the Cuban Crisis of the 1960's, but the potential of a big bullet in the shape of a Soviet missile killing me, was a big enough bullet for me.

Many service wives at Plattsburgh AFB flew home when the Cuban Crisis started, leaving their husbands behind, but my wife Deanna braved it out with our daughter while I was missing, and we stuck it out together afterwards. She and I would be instrumental in bringing an investigator named Don Edwards into the Church. She had many Church callings in the Primary and Young Women's organization. I would become the Branch Clerk for the congregation. She didn't get to see me much during the crisis and after, because I worked sometimes 12-16 hours a day, even after we returned to DEFCON 4. We had to get all sites back to EWO status because a lot of the fuels (RP-1) and oxidizers (Liquid Oxygen) had been used in pre-launch preparations during the crisis on all 12 sites. I was part of a crew, including our supervisor, that had to travel with three transporters to a civilian production plant outside of Boston, Mass, to pick up extra liquid oxygen and nitrogen because our plant couldn't keep up.

As a side note, one of the 70 foot transporter drivers ahead of me negotiating the narrow streets of Boston, took a right turn to close, and laid down one of the street lights designed like the “Ole Lamplighter” gas lights.

Steve and I did some pretty crazy things besides making good time at 80 MPH with hazardous material on board. One extremely hazardous trip with icy road conditions after a notorious “Noreaster” snow storm, Steve and I were headed to the site near Mooers Forks. We had been authorized to take a county road (big mistake), rather than the Interstate. As we began to climb a steep grade with our separate transporters, I saw Steve’s rig begin to “jackknife” (tractor/truck drive wheels slip to right off road). He turned on the sanders (drops sand in front of drive wheels), but his rig wasn’t getting enough traction because it was underpowered (a gas driven Ford) for the load he had. My tractor truck was a heavier diesel unit built by American LaFrance (they build fire trucks).

I don’t know why I did it to this day, but I pulled up right behind him, matched the rear bumper of his oxygen transporter with the front bumper of my rig and transporter and pushed him to the top of the hill.

Must have been some sight for area rural residents seeing two rigs with a combined length of 140 feet inching up the hill throwing snow and ice all over the place.

There were other times when missile site personnel would unintentionally endanger us by overfilling the liquid oxygen tanks in the silo tanks below us. It was either buy human error, or because of faulty tank gauges. We were above at ground level on the site pad, and liquid oxygen would come up the vent from a hundred or so feet below, and spill out on the ground around us. If there had been any grease or other hydrocarbon matter on the servicing pad around us, and there had been an ignition source (spark or fire), the liquid and hydrocarbon would have exploded around us. Add to that danger cold winter weather and cryogenic liquid at below 200 degrees, and it was easy to get frostbite. The tips of my ears were frostbitten one winter in a matter of a few minutes.

Many times site commanders would order high priority loads during the height of the worst snow storms, and off Steve and I would go cutting fresh tracks on unplowed roads with at least a foot of snow. There was danger everywhere we went, whether from the hazardous loads we carried or unpredictable weather in the Adirondack Mountains. During one wind blown winter storm, I had left the Redford Site with a partial load of liquid oxygen. I was coming down a steep grade slowly after just leaving the site access road, and all of a sudden I see red clearance running lights on a big vehicle in my driver’s side mirror. The thought went through my mind, “ what damn fool would be trying to pass me on a night like this”. The next thing I know, I recognize my own trailer/transporter as it is jackknifing (slipping to the left) into the oncoming lane as if it we trying to pass me.

By gently applying the transporter and tractor brakes alternately, I was able to bring the rig to a full stop at the bottom of the hill, but not before the transporter had jackknifed in the other direction several times knocking down numerous wooden poles along the road used by snowplows as guides. When I jumped out of the rig, I was shaking (not from the cold!), and had to check and see if I wet myself. There was no damage to my vehicle. It was a slow trip back to the base!

During dry weather during the crisis Steve and I were ordered to get to the Willsboro Site and another site, as soon as possible because they were off EWO status with insufficient liquid oxygen. Crazy or not, we decided to take a sort cut between sites (not approved), and I ended up locking the brakes up on all 18 wheels. I was sitting at the end of a 12 ton bridge with a 35-40 ton rig. Steve just about creamed the rear end of my transporter trying to stop. We both got out, scratched our heads, looked under the bridge to see how strong it was built. We both backed those long rigs up for about 500 yards, started gearing up through the old transmission, and hit the bridge span at about 55 MPH (on a 25 MPH small county road). Steve said the bridge was shaking as his lighter transporter was on the span, but he just kept right on "truckin". After getting the missile sites back on status, and getting back to the base, people were asking how we did it in such a short time.

We never told! Hard working and fun, but some crazy times two twenty something airmen had. But you know what – Steve and I were awarded 500,000 mile safe driving awards by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, and the Air Force. Go Figure? We never did have an accident, and that I think was a credit to our driving skills. We both helped train new drivers before we left Plattsburgh AFB.

I don't want to sound to prideful as a Veteran, but I would say to the person reading this personal military history of mine, that I believe deeply in my Country. I believe in the City of Orem, and the need for the people of this great city to connect with it's heritage, as well as connecting with past and current Veterans. We Veterans have gone the extra miles to make sure that the freedoms they enjoy will continue, so they should cherish every freedom they have as protected under the Constitution. I did not seek or covet the awards and decorations I got, but they came anyway. By my going the extra mile, I was awarded three separate Commendation Medals, a Unit Presidential Award, and several other awards during my career. I was just doing what I felt should be done as part of my assignments during 23 years of service.

During the summer of 1965, I received Air Force orders from Plattsburgh AFB, New York, to report to Vandenberg AFB, California. Deanna and I, and the family, had moved several times from one apartment to another in or near the city of Plattsburgh after arriving in 1961. In 1964, we bought a 10x55 foot Marlette brand mobile home. When we left Plattsburgh, the government shipped our mobile home to a mobile home park in Lompoc (pronounced Lompoke), near Vandenberg AFB.

We lived in Lompoc for approximately 2 years, until me moved the mobile home to a civilian housing area called Mission Hills near Lompoc. Deanna and I had been hired by the Mission Hills neighborhood council to manage their Recreation Center on about 5 acres of land. The land was adjacent (within a half mile), of one of the Historic California Missions, being known as La Parisima. All missions were within one days horse ride from each other border to border along the coast. One of my commanders at Vandenberg was the famous “Candy Bomber” where he dropped candy in hanky parachutes to German children at the ends of the runway at Templehof Air Base near Berlin. Col. Gail Halverson was the “Bomber”, and he was the LDS (Mormon) Santa Maria Stake Young Men’s President, who called me as his Young Men’s Secretary in 1970. I was just reactivating in the Church, after being totally inactive (not going to church) since arriving in California at Vandenberg during 1965. That calling launched me into active Church Service for the remainder of my career. That Church service continues to this date.

While assigned at Vandenberg, I attained the rank of Staff Sergeant, and was assigned to work in the Fuels Refueling and Maintenance Control Center. As controllers, we coordinated the delivery of cryogenic liquids, oxidizers, and exotic fuels to active missile sites for the Atlas “F”, Titan I, Titan II, Titan III, and numerous other missile systems. I was able to watch numerous missiles being launched down the Pacific Ocean Test Range targeting Kwajalein Island. Several missiles from my last assignment at Plattsburgh AFB, were launched from Vandenberg. They were used to launch satellites into polar orbit (South/North) from several types of sites, one of which was the “coffin” because the missile was stored on it’s side, the shelter building then rolled back away. The missile launch tower then raised the missile into upright into launch position. That was a rewarding launch for me. The missile had come from one of the Plattsburgh missile silos that stood alert during the Cuban Crisis. I stood standby at the Vandenberg site one night and early morning, with a liquid oxygen transporter, and watched one of “my missiles” go down range. The liquid oxygen and RP-1 fuel combined to make a bright orange thrust flame I will never forget. All it is is a controlled explosion. Was it hazardous work? You bet it was. I could have died at any time I was working with hazardous materials on the missile systems. While I was at Vandenberg, a young airman was driving a liquid oxygen transporter near a missile site near Shilling AFB, Kansas. He lost control of his transporter on a tight turn in the road and laid it over on it’s side. Liquid began spilling out of the transporter, and diesel fuel from the truck tractor. The injured driver feverishly tried to build an earthen dike between the two liquids, but didn’t make it. A spark from the tool he was digging with ignited an explosion that killed him, and left a large crater (wide and deep) where the transporter had been.

The question was...was it hazardous work?! I helped in recovery work off base near Santa Maria, California, when a civilian contractor oxygen transporter had rolled. With my cryogenic gear on, I backed up to the disabled rig on a California highway, and transferred several thousand gallons of explosive liquid oxygen into my transporter.

Another time, while waiting for offloading at a Titan II missile gantry (25 stories in height) on South Vandenberg where all the launch sites were, we watched helplessly from the 10th floor, as one of our transporters (loaded with liquid) lost its air brake pressure, jumped its tire chocks, and gently backed itself down the hill and jackknifed down a hill. I was the site cryogenic supervisor, and I, and the crew with me, were exonerated from any responsibility because of faulty equipment on the truck/tractor. We were lucky. There was not explosion. If there had been, who knows what would have happened to the gantry and missile where we stood?

The cycle was now complete. I had watched the missile sites be built at Plattsburgh. I assisted with and observed the missiles being put in the silos, raised to launch position for testing, and saw the nuclear device being installed. I stood alert with those missiles, maintaining and refueling/replenishing systems, and then saw the missile sites starting to be de-activated as new missile systems came on board in the Air Force. I had followed the Atlas "F" to Vandenberg, and enjoyed watching them be launched into the night sky, right from the family home in Lompoc (about 7 miles from launching sites) with my family by my side when I was off duty. I had experienced much in ten years. What was awaiting me in the next ten years?

I didn't have to wait long to find out. During 1969 I got orders for the Republic of South Korea, and to the location known as Kwang Ju Air Base, about 300 South of Seoul (fairly close to the Southern tip of the peninsula, and near the West Coast of the South China Sea.

The Pentagon Air Force staff had without warning stripped all of us with the Air Force Specialty Code dealing with missile cryogenics and maintenance, and dumped us without retraining into the aircraft refueling and maintenance. It would be an unaccompanied (isolated tour/without family). I moved the family (Deanna, Terina, and David) to a mobile home park in the North part of Orem, Utah (near Spanish Fork where I had grown up). Deanna did not drive, but soon got her license out of necessity. I had been teaching her in the parking lot at the Recreation Center in Mission Hills, California.

It was a gut wrenching stressful time for me. I felt that the Air Force had let me down by the way they had treated myself, and others. It soon turned out to be a blessing! Deanna was alone with two young children, but my parents lived nearby in Orem, with hers in Spanish Fork. She soon became more independent than she had ever been in her life. My stress on the Kwang Ju flight line maintaining and refueling aircraft, was escalated by the fact the airmen I was supervising knew more about, and operating the equipment we had than I did. I had been working with missiles for the past 9 years! I soon adjusted, and my talents and knowledge were rewarded in being placed as the supervisor in charge of the Fuels and Lubricants laboratory testing fuel and other hydrocarbons for purity. I was also asked to train Republic of Korea Sergeants in laboratory procedures. I was next placed as the Non-Commissioned Officer in charge of Supply, which meant I was ordering all refueling and maintenance parts/accessories for the entire base.

By playing “MASH”, I was allowed to fly all over the country to trade parts with other units located at Taegu, Suwon, Kimpo, Osan, Kunsan, and several air bases. I saved the Air Force in Korea over 3 million dollars by finding things needed in country, rather than from civilian/military sources in the United States. One of the Commendation Medals came from the foregoing effort.

Another stress from being in Korea was that North Korean Dictator Kim Il Soon sent infiltrators South in boats that came ashore West of the Air Base. We carried AR-15's (rifles) for several months because they would kill or capture South Korean airmen and wear their uniforms on base. We couldn't tell the difference. Luckily most of them were caught near the perimeter of the base. I was an easy mark in downtown Kwang Ju City when off duty, because I stood a head and a half taller than the average Korean (6 feet 4 inches). We knew the infiltrators were in the city! I didn't let it intimidate me, but none the less there was still stress involved. It's interesting to note here that there was a Stone from the family in Korea approximately every 20 years. It started with my Brother Jay in the early 1950's during the war around Heart Break Ridge (now in North Korea), myself during 1970-71, and my son Dave in the early 1990's on the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone).

I still remember when working on the flight line, I would see F-105 Fighters flown by our pilots, coming back from the DMZ with bullet holes in the fuselage. The war or conflict was supposed to be over. These were things you couldn't write home about (censored!). Russian MIG Fighters flown by North Korean pilots (we hoped), got the worst end of the deal. We would patch up our “birds”, refueling them and send them back the next day. All of this was for the sake of freedom and free people from around the world.

Part of this military history was filled with the spiritual growth I experienced in Korea as part of my religious convictions within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon). As I mentioned earlier I felt stressed and alone after arriving in Korea at Kimpo Air Base West of Seoul across the Yalu river. I had finished in-processing for the day and was laying on the top bunk in a WW II type barracks. Tears came to my eyes, and I closed them offering a prayer along the lines of, “I want to know who at my assigned base belongs to the Church”. As soon as I finished it came in to my mind to call the LDS Chaplain for Kimpo. Staff in the building put me in touch with a Chaplain with a rank of Captain. He soon came and provided a comforting visit including a blessing. I was given a list of 13 officers and airmen at Kwang Ju Air Base who were members. I continued to military process through and get transportation at Osan and Kunsan Air Bases for my arrival by aircraft at Kwang Ju Air base.

After settling into my duties on the flight line for about three weeks, my supervisor rushed into my office stating, you better get your butt (other words can be substituted) over to the (non-denominational) base chapel. Some Army Colonel wants to talk to you”. I had no idea what was going on, but needless to say I didn't waste any time.

On arriving at the chapel the Catholic Chaplain for the base said for me to take a call in a private room. Colonel Gatrell (2nd Counselor in the Korea Seoul Mormon Mission Presidency) was calling from the Army Compound in Seoul. He asked if I would accept a call as the Kwang Ju Air Base LDS Serviceman's Group Leader (almost identical to being a Branch President or congregation leader). I was speechless! Tears again filled my eyes, until President Gatrell got my attention. I accepted, and soon called 2 counselors to assist me, and we were set apart when Pres. Gatrell, who as a colonel controlled Army aircraft, sent a plane to bring us to Seoul to be set apart. We organized a group, which had combined Sacrament and Priesthood Meetings each Sunday night, and scripture study 7 nights a week. We home taught everyone on the list that I was given coming in country, and those who would follow. We had two convert baptisms, after the full time missionaries in Kwang Ju City trained us in the missionary discussions. Until the day she died in 2003, my wife Deanna called my experience as Group Leader my "one year full time Mormon mission" for the Church. A fringe benefit with Church leadership, was that we were able to fly all over Korea, as well as to Seoul for meetings or retreats called by the Mission Presidency. One of the best friends I had in the Air Force, even after we both were out of the Air Force, was Art Sawtell who died during the 1990's in Fresno, California of a cancerous brain tumor. We both shared many experiences, including great times shared with the Kwang Ju City Missionaries, and Art and I teaching Korean Professors at Kwang Ju University English as a second language for free. Those professors from the 1970's went on to perfect the laser along with their peers around the world. We also provided the same service for executives of the Bank of Kwang Ju, and were treated to free use of their tennis courts. We also stayed and dined at the executive's mansions and estates in the countryside.

All the above was happening to me after only beginning to attend Church barely a year earlier. Toward the end of my 13 month tour at Kwang Ju, I was summoned to the office of the Vice-Base (assistant) Commander at Kwang Ju.

Being told to report to the "Old Man" could be pretty un-nerving even if you know him fairly well as I did because of my involvement doing things around the base. I walked into his office, popped of a crisp salute at attention, and then he said, "Sergeant Stone, do you see the two sets of orders I have in my hands?" Yes Sir, I do I replied! He was now playing with and taunting me. He then said, "The Pentagon has made a huge mistake Sergeant". That's when the lump settled in my stomach. He continued, "I have two sets of orders". He then turned the orders around on their backsides, where he had written Nellis AFB, Nevada, and the other Hickam AFB, Hawaii, and said, "which one do you want?" I didn't hesitate at all, "Sir, I'll take Hickam". And that dear reader is why myself and family enjoyed 4 wonderful years in Hawaii at or near the base near Honolulu.

We lived for six months in an apartment in Pearl City, Hawaii, on the hills overlooking Pearl Harbor Naval Base, then moved onto Hickam AFB, for the remainder of the tour. Our Church callings here would be for Deanna - Sunday School Coordinator for the

Youth in the Halawa Ward (chapel overlooked Pearl Harbor), and Primary children callings.

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Mine would be Assistant Ward (or congregation) Clerk, and Ward Clerk. The Bishops of the Ward asked Deanna and I to fellowship the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine and Coast Guard LDS Youth away from their homes. One of them would become the 5th military member, Bill Curley, to join the Church through our entire family's efforts. I flew back to Hawaii from Lubbock, Texas, to baptize him. Many of these youth, not much younger than myself, remain friends to this day. I was to become a volunteer Officer (1st Lieutenant) in the Hickam Civil Air Patrol Squadron. I taught aeronautics to cadets, one of which went to the Air Force Academy, and is now a Colonel in the Air Force. We flew on searches over the ocean and had campouts on islands like Kauau. We gave the cadets flying lessons in gliders on the North shore of Oahu. My son Dave got a check ride in one. The last orientation ride for a cadet (I arranged rides through the Hawaii Air Nat'l Guard) was changed at the last minute, and my cadets insisted that I take the F-102 Fighter flight. It was one of the capstone experiences halfway through my military career. What an experience actually flying the fighter next to the pilot seated beside me. It wouldn't be the last check ride I would get before I retired from the Air Force.

My duties at Hickam consisted of flight line control specialist coordinating maintenance and refueling, and Non-Commissioned Officer in charge of the base Liquid Oxygen Facility (due to my experience with cryogenics). Myself and workers I supervised raised roses at the facility, which I surprised Deanna with almost daily. I assisted our squadron in winning an Air Force Award for best in the Air Force, and was awarded my second Commendation Award.

Before leaving Hawaii, Deanna, I, and our first two children, would experience fantastic hikes on military reservations high in the mountains on the Koolauu (pronounced ko-oh-lao-u) range.

We would snorkel at Barbers Point (near the naval base) collecting coral (shame on us!), and seeing sharks (that was scary, especially for Dave), and snorkeling at Hanama Bay near Honolulu to see hundreds of fish. We took many family members and friends to the Arizona Memorial while we housed them at our base home. We stayed on the Big Island and saw the volcanos, and visited an orchid nursery that Deanna savored. We visited the cross placed on Army property, which marks the place where the Japanese planes first flew over the pass to bomb and torpedo numerous ships and planes at Pearl Harbor and Hickam AFB (they sit fence to fence/side by side near the ocean). I think we were pretty good tour directors.

After we left Hawaii, our next assignment was a big letdown after experiencing Hawaii. I was assigned to Reese AFB, Texas (now closed), near Lubbock, Texas. The base and Lubbock were located about 125 miles due South from Amarillo, Texas.

As the reader may note, my Air Force career started at Lackland AFB, then I went on the Amarillo AFB, Texas and etc. So, like the song goes, "Right back where I started from" applies here. I had come full circle.

Our family lived in a home in the Northwest side of Lubbock, Texas, not far from Reese AFB to the Northwest. Our educationally handicapped daughter Terina (now a grown woman) graduated with honors from the Specialized Disabled Program at Monterey High School. Our son Dave would graduate from high school in Utah from Mountain View High School in Orem. Deanna's and my own callings in the Lubbock LDS Church 1st Ward would be her involvement in Primary, and my functioning as a Stake Missionary with the office a Seventy in the Church. In that calling Deanna and I would go to small towns miles from Lubbock in the Texas panhandle, taking the full time missionaries and doing missionary work with them. One of the people that I supervised at the base, named Brooks Ackerman, would be brought into our home for missionary discussions, He would later join the LDS Church. He was our 9th investigator.

It was here in Texas, that I became very ill and was sent to Sheppard AFB Medical Facility for treatment. Doctor's at Reese AFB had thought I should be diagnosed with psychiatric problems and complicating medical problems, but upon arriving at Sheppard it was found that the problems were physiological (or medically) related. I was soon declassified as needing mental health treatment, and was tested for medical problems that I am being treated for to this date. I volunteered for duty in the mental health treatment area of the facility while an outpatient. I helped patients when medics/aids weren't available. I volunteered to attend all types of therapy for my own good.

When I was discharged from the medical center, I had an interview with both an Air Force medical doctor, and at my request a Major who was a psychologist. When I left his office, I knew that my next career after leaving the Air Force would be in mental health, and I made that happen with a degree from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

I distinguished myself at this assignment in Texas, by assisting the flying training week (for pilots) in getting a prestigious maintenance and refueling award for best facilities in the Air Force. I was now a Technical Sergeant, again wearing a white (this time two piece) uniform in my function as the Supervisor over the base quality control laboratory. I became the maintenance and refueling training supervisor preparing airmen for upgrade training and testing. Along with these duties, I was also the quality control inspector for my organization. I would be awarded my third commendation award at this assignment. Before I retired from the Air Force during the summer of 1980, a 2nd Lieutenant named Danny Draper contacted me in my office near the flight line. He had just graduated from ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corp) at a college near his home town in South Texas. He said that because of my training, background, and experience of over 20 years, he had been referred to me. To this day, I don't know who made that referral.

This would be the beginning of a sincere professional friendship between an Air Force line officer, and myself as a senior NCO for the next two years.

With the rank of Technical Sergeant, I had been nominated for my sixth stripe to become a Master Sergeant, and Lt. Draper was a driving force behind that process. At my retirement party at a Supper Club in Lubbock, Danny gave me a lot of credit for the successes he had achieved as OIC (Officer In Charge) of our maintenance and refueling squadron at Reese AFB. He said my training him went a long way to giving him the foundation he needed. He would go on to a very successful career in logistics, including an assignment at the Pentagon. He is now retired at the rank of Colonel. It is very uncommon for new Officers to ask Non-Commissioned-Officers for training, so it was a special experience to end a career on.

Prior to my retirement, numerous airmen being assigned to our squadron were having a hard time adjusting to life in the Air Force. Most of the problem was being caused by other Non-Commissioned-Officers of equal or higher rank than myself. They would not problem solve and communicate with these airmen through one on one, or group discussions. Seeing the problem, I began to organize programs so that these supervisors, airmen, as well as officers, would do community service off base.

We visited several "at risk youth" facilities to visit with the youth as we brought gifts, clothing and other needs to them. In the process of working with the youth, the older Sergeants working side by side with airmen, took that experience in communicating back to the work setting at the base. Work productivity increased as everyone worked better together. Another program that I started was the "Airman of the Quarter" Program, where the top performing airman in our organization was given a "Check-ride" on a KC-135 (air refueler) base at Dyess AFB, Texas, just outside the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. One of these airmen was named Jim Johnson, who worked with me in the base laboratory where I was the supervisor. I decided to go with him on this last program check-ride I would be involved with before I retired. When we took off from Dyess AFB, the plane headed toward a refueling track (at 35,000 feet) that ranged from Nebraska through Oklahoma for the night run. We watched as the enlisted boom operator flew the boom down to the intake nozzle on several aircraft we mid-air refueled. The aircraft included F-16 and F15 Fighters, as well as a huge B-1 bomber, which was as big as the plane we were flying in. You could see the faces of the pilot/co-pilot lit up by their panel instrument lights. The pilots had to line up on special guidance lights on the under-belly of the KC-135 refueler. They would then take on hundreds, and sometimes thousands of gallons through the refueling boom as part of their mission training. After all planes had been refueled, Airman Johnson and I were able to "fly" the boom as if simulating a refueling with an aircraft below us.

As we flew back toward the base near Ft. Worth, I reminded the pilot that we had arranged for Jim to fly the plane. Jim was summoned on the intercom from the cargo area behind the cockpit where he and I were sitting. Un-announced, the co-pilot got out of his seat, put the plane on auto-pilot, and stood behind Airman Johnson.

He then said, “well Johnson, what are you going to do?” With a nudge from me, and with the co-pilot turning off the auto-pilot, he sat down and flew the plane for at least 10 minutes.

With minimal instruction, he was able to do left rudder - left yoke (like a modified steering wheel on a car) for a gentle left turn. He was then asked to come to a new compass heading, and make a right banking turn. He said it was a thrill of a lifetime. After Jim got out of the co-pilot seat, I turned to walk back into the cargo bay. The pilot caught my arm as he said, “not so fast Sergeant Stone, just sit your butt down in my seat and take your turn while I hit the toilet”. I was stunned! This wasn't part of the plan I thought. Soon, I was flying a plane the size of a DC-9, or L-1011 jet passenger airliner. I was able to come to a new heading and fly directly over our Lubbock neighborhood. Having now flown in gliders, Civil Air Patrol aircraft, and an Air Force F-102 Fighter with it's quick response to my piloting – all in Hawaii, it was a thrill to watch the slow response of the aircraft hydraulic systems as I made left and right banking turns over Texas. What a way to end a career. I now have about 15 flying hours in both civilian and military aircraft in Hawaii, Texas, and Utah, but have not as yet landed or made a takeoff, or become a licensed pilot.

Upon retirement in 1980, our family left the low skyscrapers of Lubbock in rear view mirrors of our two cars and headed for Utah. I was soon hired part time in Sears Security in Provo, Utah, and started attending what is now Utah Valley State College (UVSC) in Provo and Orem. I completed a Bachelors Degree in Social Work at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, with hours towards a Master's Degree. We had moved into a home bought from Deanna's brother Kent at 1688 South 350 West, Orem, Utah. Terina and I still live in that home following Deanna passing away on December 18, 2003. I am also retired from the Utah Adult Department of Corrections as a Correctional Rehabilitative Specialist and Social Worker/Therapist (equal to a street police lieutenant) , as of December 31st 2002. I am currently a Commissioner with the Orem City Heritage Commission, having been it's Chairman, and now as the Public Relations Representative. I helped design, as part of the Commission, the Veterans Memorial Statue and Site at the Orem City Cemetary. My wife is buried nearby, where I will also be laid to rest. I am currently the Logistics Chairman for the Logistics Committee at the Mountain Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross in Provo, Utah. I am also a certified ERV (Emergency Response Vehicle - the size of an ambulance) Technician for the Red Cross, driving and operating the vehicle during local and national disasters. I recently worked for five days with the Red Cross during the St. George, Utah – Arizona Strip – Mesquite, Nevada flooding early in 2005. We fed over 600 meals from the ERV daily to people in communities effected by flooding. I am also an AFES (Armed Forces Emergency Services) Caseworker for the Red Cross getting messages to military members all over the world in case of a hospitalization or death in their family. I am also the Director of the “Choices” Program, at “at risk” youth program that I directed while employed at the Utah State Prison from 1983-2002, and took into retirement.

Former inmates, now successful in the community, speak to troubled youth about choices they make that can determine if they go to prison. I want to thank Les Campbell, Orem City Councilman for taking the time to interview me for this history. It is heartfelt, and I hope my family members and others become more acquainted with our Military Veterans through this writing.

John P. Stone, Retired Senior NCO, United States Air Force